

FOURTH MEETING OF THE ALLPIRG/ADVISORY GROUP

(Montreal, 6 – 8 February 2001)

Agenda Item 4: Safety oversight-related issues

ICAO UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME

(Presented by the Secretariat)

The ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme was launched on 1 January 1999, pursuant to Assembly Resolution A32-11, and on the basis of the recommendations made by the Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference on a Global Strategy for Safety Oversight of November 1997. The Programme supersedes the voluntary assessment programme established in 1995. It is managed and run by the Safety Oversight Audit Section in the Air Navigation Bureau.

The objective of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme is to promote global aviation safety through auditing Contracting States, on an ongoing basis, to determine the status of States' implementation on safety oversight and relevant ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), associated procedures, guidance material and safety-related practices. The present scope of the Programme is limited to Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft* and Annex 8 — *Airworthiness of Aircraft*. The initial mandate of the Programme is to audit all Contracting States and report to the next regular session of the Assembly in 2001.

The audit process starts six months prior to the audit, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between ICAO and each State, as the principle of sovereignty must be fully respected. Audits are conducted by experienced auditors selected by ICAO, who must undergo a training course as well as on-the-job training before being approved as auditors.

A typical audit is conducted over a period of seven working days by a team of three auditors following standard auditing procedures and protocols. The length and duration of the audit, as well as the composition of the team are adjusted on the basis of the level of aviation activity in the State. Audits begin and end with detailed briefings from the ICAO audit team to the Civil Aviation Authority and other officials of the State. At the end of the audit, the State is provided with a draft of the findings of recommendations, so that it may start the development of its corrective action plan, if necessary.

The interim and final audit reports are confidential. However, in order to assist other States in forming an opinion on the safety status of the audited State, ICAO makes available to all Contracting States summary reports which include an abstract of the audit's findings, the corrective actions proposed by the State, the status

of implementation of ICAO Annex provisions, and comments by ICAO on the overall soundness of the safety oversight system in each audited State.

The audits have helped ICAO identify safety concerns in a number of States. They have also revealed the need to provide assistance to States to resolve such concerns.

The Safety Oversight Audit Section also conducts regional safety oversight seminar/workshops aimed at State officials and the aviation industry in general, with the objective of increasing the awareness of States regarding their safety oversight responsibilities under the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*.

Preliminary work has started with a view to expanding the Programme to other technical fields, as recommended by the DGCA Conference.

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